AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-32. (Canceled)

33. (Currently amended) A method for treating a patient diagnosed with or at risk for developing rheumatoid arthritis, said method comprising administering to the patient an azole and a steroid, wherein the azole and steroid are systemically administered simultaneously or within[[§]] 14 days of each other, in amounts sufficient to treat said patient.

34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said azole and steroid are administered within 10 days of each other.

35. (Previously presented) The method of claim 34, wherein said azole and steroid are administered within five days of each other.

36. (Previously presented) The method of claim 35, wherein said azole and steroid are administered within twenty-four hours of each other.

37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said azole is an imidazole or a triazole.

38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said imidazole is selected sulconazole, miconazole, clotrimazole, oxiconazole, butocontazole, tioconazole, econazole, and ketoconazole.

39. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said triazole is selected from itrazonazole, fluconazole, voriconazole, posaconazole, ravuconazole, and terconazole.

40. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said steroid is a corticosteroid.

41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 40, wherein said corticosteroid is a glucocorticoid or a mineralocorticoid.

42. (Currently amended) The method of claim 41, wherein said glucocorticoid is selected from cortisone, dexamethasone, hydrocortisone, methylprednisolone, prednisone, ~~traimcinolone,~~ triamcinolone, and diflorasone.

43. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, wherein a low ~~dose~~ dosage of said azole is administered.

44. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, wherein a low ~~dose~~ dosage of said steroid is administered.

45. (Currently amended) A method for treating a patient diagnosed with or at risk for developing rheumatoid arthritis, said method comprising administering to said patient:

a) a first compound selected from sulconazole, miconazole, clotrimazole, oxiconazole, butocontazole, tioconazole, econazole, and ketoconazole, or itrazonazole, fluconazole, voriconazole, posaconazole, ravuconazole, and terconazole; and

b) a second compound selected from dexamethasone, hydrocortisone, methylprednisolone, prednisone, ~~traimcinolone,~~ triamcinolone, and diflorasone;

wherein said first and second compounds are administered simultaneously or within 14 days of each other, and wherein said first and second compounds are administered in amounts sufficient to treat rheumatoid arthritis in said patient.

46. (Previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and an azole and a steroid, wherein said azole and said steroid are present in an amount that, when systemically administered to a patient, inhibit or reduce the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis; and wherein said azole is not effective as an anti-fungal agent.

47. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 46, wherein said azole is present in an amount of 1 to 200 milligrams and said steroid is administered in an amount of 1 to 1500 milligrams.

48. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 47, wherein said azole is present in an amount of 5 to 25 milligrams and said steroid is administered in an amount of 1 to 30 milligrams.

49. (Currently amended) The ~~method~~ composition of claim 46, wherein said composition comprises a low dosage of said azole.

50. (Currently amended) The ~~method~~ composition of claim 46, wherein said composition comprises a low dosage of said steroid.

51. (Previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and an azole and a steroid, wherein said azole is in amounts that are not effective as an antifungal agent.